

YOUTH COURT

PURPOSE STATEMENT

The Superior Court of California, County of Fresno, will serve the community and enhance public trust and confidence in the administration of justice by the impartial and timely resolution of disputes, ensuring compliance with court directives, and by fostering a vital court-community relationship.

The vision of the Fresno Unified School District is a learning environment that inspires in our students and families the passion and the power to make positive life choices by becoming architects of their future.

Fresno Unified School District
Clovis Unified School District
2001-2002

Bullard HS
Clovis HS
Fresno HS
Sunnyside HS

When?

Youth Court sessions are held twice a month on designated afternoons.

Where?

The hearings are at the school site in a location designated by the school principal.

What?

Youth Court operates with the full authority of a court of law. The basic difference is that high school students determine the youth's sentence after listening to the youth's statement and the charges by the arresting agency.

For more information, please contact:
Terri Pieretti #451-4510
Sheran Morton: #488-6772

Who?

The Police Probation Team refers a student arrested/cited for an offense within the program criteria to Youth Court. The jurors are selected from a cross section of interested high school students. Jurors are students enrolled in school who are given specific training to be a juror. Judges from the Fresno County Superior Court preside over the Youth Court proceedings.

Why?

Youth Court is a unique opportunity for the Juvenile Justice system and the School to work together as one unit to prevent serious juvenile crime. About one-third of the young people arrested for misdemeanors will go on to commit more serious crime. Youth Court is an opportunity to intervene sooner and hold youth accountable for their actions. Youth Court sanctions are specifically designed to prevent further escalation of negative behavior.

TYPES OF OFFENSES

- ◆ Petty theft
- ◆ Simple battery
- ◆ Graffiti
- ◆ Possession of marijuana for personal use
- ◆ Possession of alcohol
- ◆ Vandalism
- ◆ Any misdemeanor determined by Probation and the Court



HEARING FORMAT

1. Opening comments and swearing in by presiding judge.
2. The probation officer summarizes the police report for the jury.
3. The youth describes the incident in his/her own words.
4. Jury members ask questions of the youth.
5. The youth makes statement (optional).
6. The jury retires and deliberates to determine the appropriate sentence.
7. The judge reads the sentence to the youth.
8. The jury foreperson explains the findings of the jury to the youth.

THE CREED

I am a JUROR.

I am a seeker after truth.

I must listen carefully with concentration to all of the evidence.

I must heed and follow the instructions of the court.

I must lay aside all bias and prejudice.

I must be led by my intelligence and not by my emotions.

I must respect the opinions of my fellow jurors, and they must respect mine, and in a spirit of tolerance and understanding must endeavor to bring the deliberations of the jury to agreement upon sentence;...but

I must never agree to a verdict that violates the instructions of the Court.

My sentence must do justice, for what is true, and when my term of jury service is ended, I will leave it with my conscience clear.